



# Waterwise Gardening Tips

**Workshop at Tiny Shops Village 7<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

Using a combination of strategic watering and mulching we can reduce the amount of water consumed by our gardens. Water deeply, not too often and cover the soil to prevent evaporation.

## Watering *deeply but less often, encourages plants to grow deeper roots*

- If you have mulched around your plants you should only need to water once a week in summer and not at all in winter. Avoid watering lawns or grass berms, rain suffices.
- In summer, water before 7am when it is cooler, so plants have a nice drink before the heat of the day. Watering in the evening may encourage disease in your plants.
- Containers and raised beds require more watering than a ground level garden.
- Of course water/mulch in response to how your plants are looking, the seasons and wind. Note that sandy soil will need more water than other types as it drains fast. You can add compost and manures to combat this or simply choose plants that prefer your soil type.

## Mulch *is a protective covering spread or left on the ground to reduce evaporation.*

*It also can maintain even soil temperature, prevent erosion, control weeds and enrich the soil.*

- **Biodegradable mulches include:** straw, pea straw, bark chips, *brown* pine needles, compost, broken down grass clippings, newspaper, cardboard or packaged mulch mixes. Avoid composting your weeds or using them as mulch – they go straight in the green bin.
  - The deeper the mulch the greater the water retention. You want not too thick or thin. E.g. around 7cm deep if using bark as your mulch.
  - When mulching trees and shrubs give them space around the trunk or they will sweat, then rot. Don't mulch around cacti or succulents. Leave grass clippings to mulch lawns.
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- **Suppress weeds:** by watering, then laying down cardboard or newspaper, watering again and topping with a layer of compost. This will all break down over time, the compost stops the cardboard from blowing away and the earthworms will love it. Stones and shells may also be used as a physical barrier discouraging weeds, but lack the other benefits.
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- **Living mulch, also known as cover crops** are plants like mustard, lupin and clover that are planted before or after a crop to add nutrients, like nitrogen, back into the soil.
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### **GARDENING SAFETY:**

- **Wear** sun protection, gloves and a mask with no gaps : N95 level or +
- Take care with cuts and grazes
- Afterwards have a shower to get the particles of soil off you.

### **Water Restrictions are in place until May 2020**

- 1) **NO** outdoor water use between 3pm and 9pm
- 2) Use of hoses, sprinklers and garden irrigation systems is permitted only on alternate days:  
If you live at an on odd-numbered address, you can water your garden on odd dates (1st, 3rd, 15th, etc)